AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the title to the following amended title:

SPLICING AND CONNECTORIZATION OF PHOTONIC CRYSTAL ~~FIBRES~~ FIBERS

Kindly add the following Abstract of the Disclosure at the end of the application following the last page of the claims. The Abstract of the Disclosure is also set forth on a separate sheet at the end of this Preliminary Amendment.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of coupling a spliceable optical fibre for transmission of light in its longitudinal direction to an optical component, the method comprising (A) providing the spliceable optical fibre, said spliceable optical fibre comprising: (a) a core region (10, 20, 25, 30, 110); and (b) a microstructured cladding region, said cladding region surrounding said core region and comprising: (bl) an inner cladding region with inner cladding features (13, 22, 112) arranged in an inner cladding background material (11, 21, 111) with a refractive index n1, said inner cladding features comprising thermally collapsible holes or voids, and (b2) an outer cladding region with an outer cladding background material (12, 24, 114) with a refractive index n2; said spliceable optical fibre having at least one end; (B) collapsing said thermally collapsible holes or voids by heating said least one end of said spliceable optical fibre; and (C) coupling said collapsed spliceable optical fibre end to the optical component. A spliceable optical fibre; a preform for producing a spliceable optical fibre; a method of producing a spliceable optical fibre comprising drawing of the preform; a heat-treated spliceable optical fibre; an article comprising a spliceable optical fibre is further disclosed.